

103^D CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. 1512

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 12, 1994

Referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

AN ACT

To amend title 38, United States Code, to require the establishment in the Department of Veterans Affairs of mental illness research, education, and clinical centers, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. MENTAL ILLNESS RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND**
2 **CLINICAL CENTERS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 73 of
4 title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the
5 end the following:

6 **“§ 7319. Mental illness research, education, and clini-**
7 **cal centers**

8 “(a) The purpose of this section is to improve the
9 provision of health-care services and related counseling
10 services to eligible veterans suffering from mental illness,
11 especially mental illness related to service-related condi-
12 tions, through research (including research on improving
13 mental health service facilities of the Department and on
14 improving the delivery of mental health services by the De-
15 partment), education and training of personnel, and the
16 development of improved models and systems for the fur-
17 nishing of mental health services by the Department.

18 “(b)(1) In order to carry out the purpose of this sec-
19 tion, the Secretary, upon the recommendation of the
20 Under Secretary for Health and pursuant to the provi-
21 sions of this subsection, shall—

22 “(A) designate not more than five health-care
23 facilities of the Department as the locations for a
24 center of research on mental health services, on the
25 use by the Department of specific models for fur-
26 nishing such services, on education and training, and

1 on the development and implementation of innova-
2 tive clinical activities and systems of care with re-
3 spect to the delivery of such services by the Depart-
4 ment; and

5 “(B) subject to the appropriation of funds for
6 such purpose, establish and operate such centers at
7 such locations in accordance with this section.

8 “(2) The Secretary shall designate at least one facil-
9 ity under paragraph (1) not later than January 1, 1994.

10 “(3) The Secretary shall, upon the recommendation
11 of the Under Secretary for Health, ensure that the facili-
12 ties designated for centers under paragraph (1) are lo-
13 cated in various geographic regions.

14 “(4) The Secretary may not designate any health-
15 care facility as a location for a center under paragraph
16 (1) unless—

17 “(A) the peer review panel established under
18 paragraph (5) has determined under that paragraph
19 that the proposal submitted by such facility as a lo-
20 cation for a new center under this subsection is
21 among those proposals which have met the highest
22 competitive standards of scientific and clinical merit;
23 and

24 “(B) the Secretary, upon the recommendation
25 of the Under Secretary for Health, determines that

1 the facility has developed (or may reasonably be an-
2 ticipated to develop)—

3 “(i) an arrangement with an accredited
4 medical school which provides education and
5 training in psychiatry and with which the facil-
6 ity is affiliated under which arrangement resi-
7 dents receive education and training in psychia-
8 try through regular rotation through the facility
9 so as to provide such residents with training in
10 the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness;

11 “(ii) an arrangement with an accredited
12 graduate school of psychology under which ar-
13 rangement students receive education and train-
14 ing in clinical, counseling, or professional psy-
15 chology through regular rotation through the
16 facility so as to provide such students with
17 training in the diagnosis and treatment of men-
18 tal illness;

19 “(iii) an arrangement under which nursing,
20 social work, or allied health personnel receive
21 training and education in mental health care
22 through regular rotation through the facility;

23 “(iv) the ability to attract scientists who
24 have demonstrated creativity and achievement
25 in research—

1 “(I) into the evaluation of innovative
2 approaches to the design of mental health
3 services; or

4 “(II) into the causes, prevention, and
5 treatment of mental illness;

6 “(v) a policymaking advisory committee
7 composed of appropriate mental health-care and
8 research personnel of the facility and of the af-
9 filiated school or schools to advise the directors
10 of the facility and the center on policy matters
11 pertaining to the activities of the center during
12 the period of the operation of the center; and

13 “(vi) the capability to evaluate effectively
14 the activities of the center, including activities
15 relating to the evaluation of specific efforts to
16 improve the quality and effectiveness of mental
17 health services provided by the Department at
18 or through individual facilities.

19 “(5)(A) In order to provide advice to assist the Under
20 Secretary for Health and the Secretary to carry out their
21 responsibilities under this section, the official within the
22 Central Office of the Veterans Health Administration re-
23 sponsible for mental health and behavioral sciences mat-
24 ters shall establish a panel to assess the scientific and clin-

1 ical merit of proposals that are submitted to the Secretary
2 for the establishment of new centers under this subsection.

3 “(B) The membership of the panel shall consist of
4 experts in the fields of mental health research, education
5 and training, and clinical care. Members of the panel shall
6 serve as consultants to the Department for a period of
7 no longer than six months.

8 “(C) The panel shall review each proposal submitted
9 to the panel by the official referred to in subparagraph
10 (A) and shall submit its views on the relative scientific
11 and clinical merit of each such proposal to that official.

12 “(D) The panel shall not be subject to the Federal
13 Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

14 “(c) Clinical and scientific investigation activities at
15 each center may compete for the award of funding from
16 amounts appropriated for the Department of Veterans Af-
17 fairs medical and prosthetics research account and shall
18 receive priority in the award of funding from such account
19 insofar as funds are awarded to projects and activities re-
20 lating to mental illness.

21 “(d) The Under Secretary for Health shall ensure
22 that at least three centers designated under subsection
23 (b)(1)(A) emphasize research into means of improving the
24 quality of care for veterans suffering from mental illness

1 through the development of community-based alternatives
2 to institutional treatment for such illness.

3 “(e) The Under Secretary for Health shall ensure
4 that useful information produced by the research, edu-
5 cation and training, and clinical activities of the centers
6 established under subsection (b)(1) is disseminated
7 throughout the Veterans Health Administration through
8 publications and through programs of continuing medical
9 and related education provided through regional medical
10 education centers under subchapter VI of chapter 74 of
11 this title and through other means.

12 “(f) The official within the Central Office of the Vet-
13 erans Health Administration responsible for mental health
14 and behavioral sciences matters shall be responsible for
15 supervising the operation of the centers established pursu-
16 ant to subsection (b)(1).

17 “(g)(1) There are authorized to be appropriated for
18 the Department of Veterans Affairs for the basic support
19 of the research and education and training activities of
20 the centers established pursuant to subsection (b)(1) the
21 following:

22 “(A) \$3,125,000 for fiscal year 1994.

23 “(B) \$6,250,000 for each of fiscal years 1995
24 through 1997.

1 “(2) In addition to the funds available under the au-
 2 thorization of appropriations in paragraph (1), the Under
 3 Secretary for Health shall allocate to such centers from
 4 other funds appropriated generally for the Department of
 5 Veterans Affairs medical care account and the Depart-
 6 ment of Veterans Affairs medical and prosthetics research
 7 account such amounts as the Under Secretary for Health
 8 determines appropriate in order to carry out the purposes
 9 of this section.”.

10 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
 11 at the beginning of chapter 73 of such title is amended
 12 by adding at the end of the matter relating to subchapter
 13 II the following:

“7319. Mental illness research, education, and clinical centers.”.

14 (c) REPORTS.—Not later than February 1 of each of
 15 1995, 1996, and 1997, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs
 16 shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of
 17 the Senate and House of Representatives a report on the
 18 status and activities during the previous fiscal year of the
 19 mental illness, research, education, and clinical centers es-
 20 tablished pursuant to section 7319 of title 38, United
 21 States Code (as added by subsection (a)). Each such re-
 22 port shall contain the following:

23 (1) A description of—

24 (A) the activities carried out at each center
 25 and the funding provided for such activities;

1 (B) the advances made at each center in
2 research, education and training, and clinical
3 activities relating to mental illness in veterans;
4 and

5 (C) the actions taken by the Under Sec-
6 retary for Health pursuant to subsection (d) of
7 such section (as so added) to disseminate useful
8 information derived from such activities
9 throughout the Veterans Health Administra-
10 tion.

11 (2) The Secretary's evaluations of the effective-
12 ness of the centers in fulfilling the purposes of the
13 centers.

14 (d) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 7314(d)(1)
15 of such title is amended by striking out “the Chief Medical
16 Director” and inserting in lieu thereof “the Under Sec-
17 retary for Health”.

Passed the Senate March 24 (legislative day, Feb-
ruary 22), 1994.

Attest: WALTER J. STEWART,
Secretary.